



U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

Anchorage Field Office
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Administrative Determination (AD)/Documentation of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) Out of the Wild - Surviving Alaska, Inc.

AK-010-08- DNA-052



Location:

Seward Meridian, T. 12 N., R. 3 W., Sections 3

Prepared By:

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Administrative Determination (AD)
Documentation of Land Use Plan Conformance and NEPA Adequacy (DNA)
U.S. Department of the Interior - Bureau of Land Management
Anchorage Field Office

A. **BLM Office:** Anchorage Field Office **Lease/Serial Case File No.:** AA 089350

Proposed Action Title/Type: Commercial Filming of Learn To Return Class

Location of Proposed Action: Campbell Tract; Seward Meridian, T. 12 N., R. 3 W., Section 3; USGS topographic map Anchorage A-8.

Description of the Proposed Action:

The BLM *proposes* to issue a land use permit pursuant to FLPMA for the filming of a television production that is to generate commercial revenues. The proposed action is to film nine contestants of the reality film production, The Alaska Experiment, which is expected to air on the Discovery Channel in the spring of 2009. Filming will occur on the Campbell Tract in Anchorage, Alaska. The contestants will be filmed while attending a Learn To Return – Survival Training Systems, Inc. educational program being hosted on the Campbell Tract on September 9th and 10th. The outdoor education of the contestants and other class members will be in proper fire building, food procurement, river crossing, and shelter repair/construction.

Learn to Return currently holds a Special Recreation Permit for a portion of the Campbell Tract that facilitates the wilderness survival techniques portion of their classroom based education program. The students for the class are covered under the Special Recreation Permit held by Learn to Return. This action will only authorize the film crew.

There will be no more than three producers, one camera and one sound man, two assistants, and two personal assistants comprising the film crew. There may be less at times through the filming, but never more than nine people in the film crew for this portion of the production. All equipment used for the filming on federal lands will be hand carried. All filming will be conducted with hand held equipment. There will be no vegetation or ground disturbance.

Applicant (if any): Out of the Wild - Surviving Alaska, Inc. (WILD)

B. **Conformance with the Land Use Plan (LUP) and Consistency with Related Subordinate Implementation Plans**

LUP Name: *BLM – Alaska’s Ring of Fire Resource Management Plan*

Date Approved: March 21, 2008

Other document: *A Management Plan for Public Use and Resource Management on the Bureau of Land Management Campbell Tract Facility*

Date Approved: June, 1988

The Tract is within the planning boundary of BLM-Alaska's Ring of Fire Resource Management Plan. The Ring of Fire Resource Management Plan was approved by BLM-Alaska's State Director on March 21, 2008. The Ring of Fire Resource Management Plan incorporates the provisions of *A Management Plan for Public Use and Resource Management on the Bureau of Land Management Campbell Tract Facility* (BLM June, 1988) as management guidance for the authorization of public use of the Tract.

The June 1988 Tract management plan acknowledges that "... opportunities exist for commercial recreation ...," on the Tract. Further, the plan promotes environmental education as a legitimate use of the Tract,

Authorize environmental education group uses of the tract in Zone 3. Limit organized group uses of the CT to environmental education activities.

[Part IV: The Management Program, Paragraph C.2.
Action EE-2 Environmental Education Events]

WILD's commercial¹ use of the Tract is in conformance with the *A Management Plan for Public Use and Resource Management on the Bureau of Land Management Campbell Tract Facility* (BLM June, 1988).

C. Identify applicable NEPA documents and other related documents that cover the Proposed Action.

AK-010-08-EA-016 – *Learn To Return – Survival Training Systems, Inc.* This document is on file in the Anchorage Field Office.

EA-AK-040-8025: *Environmental Assessment: Public Use and Resource Management on the Bureau of Land Management Campbell Tract Facility*. This document is on file in the Anchorage Field Office.

EA-AK-040-92-003: *Campbell Creek Environmental Education Center Development Plan and Environmental Assessment*, February 1993. This document is on file in the Anchorage Field Office.

¹ Commercial use in this context does not contemplate an irreversible, irretrievable or long-term commitment of resources such as gravel extraction or the harvest of forest products. Rather, commercial use in this context is incidental and secondary to recreational use and a temporary, short term non-consumptive use of resources.

D. NEPA Adequacy Criteria

- 1. Is the current Proposed Action substantially the same action (or is a part of that action) as previously analyzed? Is the current Proposed Action located at a site specifically analyzed in an existing document?**

Yes. The current Proposed Action conforms with the intent of the environmental assessment prepared for the Learn To Return Special Recreation Permit issued for the wilderness survival techniques of the survival training program.

- 2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the current Proposed Action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?**

Yes. Additional alternatives beyond the No Action Alternative were not viewed as necessary at the time of the analysis

- 3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances?**

Yes. The circumstances have not changed. The management goals of the 1988 management plan remain the same, and today's recreational uses and interests remain basically identical to those of 1988 and 1993. The filming aspect of this activity is for commercial purposes. Filming is not prohibited on the property, however it is regulated when done for a commercial activity. The impacts to the land are minimal and without the commercial aspect would be considered casual use of the lands.

- 4. Do the methodology and analytical approach used in the existing NEPA document(s) continue to be appropriate for the current Proposed Action?**

Yes. The approach used in the previous documents is appropriate. The analysis in the documents is similar to what would be appropriate for the Proposed Action. User groups and BLM's management decisions have changed little since 1988 and 1993.

- 5. Are the direct and indirect impacts of the current Proposed Action substantially unchanged from those identified in the existing NEPA document(s)? Does the existing NEPA document analyze site-specific impacts related to the current Proposed Action?**

Yes. The impacts of the Proposed Action are unchanged from the existing NEPA documentation.

No additional direct or indirect impacts have been identified for the Proposed Action. The above listed environmental assessment examined the operation plans for the specific site in question.

6. Are the cumulative impacts that would result from implementation of the current Proposed Action substantially unchanged from those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)?

Yes. The cumulative impacts are unchanged from the impacts that were analyzed in the existing NEPA documents. The Proposed Action will authorize a minimal impact activity within an already analyzed area that has been authorized for educational purposes. The filming of this educational program will further the cause of learning wilderness survival techniques.

7. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current Proposed Action?

Yes. The Proposed Action occurs in an administrative area open to the public. Public involvement was adequately addressed in the above NEPA documents for the Learn to Return area.

E. Interdisciplinary Analysis:

See the attached routing form.

F. Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation measures taken for this activity will be the same as those used in the Learn to Return Special Recreation Permit, AK-010-08-EA-016. These measures are noted below and hereby incorporated into this authorization.

1. Locate training sites in areas where cultural resources are not present. Increase instructor awareness of the value and types of cultural resources found on the Tract. Require formal briefing for all training participants on prohibitions of collecting, disturbing or destroying cultural resources. Prohibit digging of “cat-holes” and require removal of human waste from the site.
2. Include a stipulation requiring instructors and students to inspect and clean boots before entering the Tract. Require under-carriage washing of vehicles delivering materials to the permanent training sites. Utilize native spruce materials for all shelter and fire building activities and inspect for disease and contaminants before bringing on the Tract.
3. Locate training sites away from heavily used multi-use trails to reduce impact on other users’ recreational experiences. Locate training sites in areas that allow maximum screening of noise and visual impacts from public trails and commonly used Tract recreational locations. Trails to training sites will not be improved or enlarged to discourage other users from inadvertently encountering sites. Post signs at designated Learn To Return training sites that identify the sites as BLM permitted activity sites. Reinforce general public prohibitions on camping and fire building on the Tract through signage.

4. Designated training sites have been established on the Tract since the early 1990's and their use is rotated seasonally. Locate training sites and activity areas away from sensitive habitat areas including stream banks and areas of unique vegetation. Instruct participants on Leave No Trace practices and prohibition on stripping trees and cutting live vegetation during field briefing. Regularly monitor impacts to trees and ground vegetation adjacent to training sites for signs of damage.
5. Activities should be scheduled when wildlife will be least impacted. Class size will be limited to 25 individuals with a maximum of 25 classes annually. Required student briefing will include information stating that all species of wildlife on the Tract are protected. Instructors will be responsible for insuring that all student participants exhibit Leave No Trace practices and minimize impacts on all Tract resources. Instructors will adhere to the Tract's Wildlife Response Policy, will be trained in safe behavior when moose and bear are encountered, and will carry defensive pepper spray on all training sessions between May 1 and October 31. Classes will be relocated off-site or rescheduled during periods of dangerous wildlife postings of incidents within 1/2 mile of the Learn To Return training sites. (Anchorage Bear Committee "red signs"). Special instruction will be given to participants regarding the dangers of bear encounters. Harassment of wildlife is prohibited.
6. Student demonstration fires will be extinguished immediately after ignition. One small group warming fire is permitted on the established concrete fire pad during snow-season overnight classes. All Learn To Return classes will include the personnel and the means for immediate extinguishment.

G. Conclusion

Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal conforms to the applicable land use plan and that the NEPA documentation fully covers the Proposed Action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

/S/
Gary Reimer
Anchorage District Manager

September 5, 2008
Date